

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Sam Farr (D-Calif.) will deliver a letter to President Obama later this week that outlines a 10-step plan to normalize relations with Cuba. Forty-six Members of Congress signed the letter.

Rep. Farr, who will be flying to the Summit of the Americas with the president on Thursday, has long been a proponent of normalizing relations with Cuba.

"It's clear that our policies toward Cuba have failed, so it's time to look in a new direction," Rep. Farr said. "I'm excited by the positive signs that are emerging from the White House and the changes we've seen in Cuba over the past couple years. I look forward to continuing to work with the president to build on this momentum during the Summit of the Americas and as we move forward."

Rep. Farr's letter outlines the following 10 steps:

- Do not oppose Cuba's full participation in the Organization of American States.
- Lift limits on gift parcels regardless of relationship.
- Remove limits on remittances regardless of relationship.
- Reestablish all forms of legal travel; investigate broadening categories.
- For agricultural trade, reinstate payment requirement in advance of delivery, not in advance of shipping.
- Allow direct U.S.-Cuba shipping without intermediate stops.
- Pursue cooperation between U.S. and Cuban security and law enforcement agencies.
- Remove designation as state sponsor of terrorism.
- Remove designation as country not cooperating with antiterrorism efforts.
- Provide aid for disaster relief and health-related assistance.

"Our government has been hostage to policies put in place 50 years ago, and that's not how we reestablish our nation as a leader," Rep. Farr said. "It's time to initiate a complete overhaul of our relationship with Cuba. It will start with reform to family travel and remittances, but it can't end there. We must expand this new policy of diplomatic outreach to our own backyard and restore responsible relations with Cuba."

A copy of the letter can be viewed here: <http://www.farr.house.gov/images/stories/Documents/cubaletter.pdf>

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